DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 313 331 SP 031 635

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TITLE Mentors and New Teachers: Reshaping the Teaching Profession in Massachusetts. Report of the Wheelock College Conference on Mentor Teacher Training (Boston, Massachusetts, August 1-5, 1988).
PUB DATE Aug 88
NOTE 44p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teachers; College School Cooperation; Collegiality; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Mentors; Parent Participation; Program Development; Program Evaluation; *Staff Role; State Standards; *Supervisory Training; *Teacher Orientation; Teacher Supervision
IDENTIFIERS *Beginning Teacher Induction; *Massachusetts

ABSTRACT

A report is given of a conference which recommended changes in the manner in which new teachers are inducted into the schools in Massachusetts. The focus of the conference was on mentoring programs. The basic philosophy of the conferees was that an effective mentoring program must be a communal enterprise, drawing upon and fostering a collegiality within the school and developing a climate in which all participants find support from their collegues and administrators. The roles are defined for the following program participants in a mentoring program: (1) mentors; (2) new teachers; (3) principals and other supervisory personnel; (4) parents; (5) school district; (6) colleges and universities; and (7) the state. Following descriptions of the responsibilities of the participants in the program a discussion is presented on training and supporting each of the roles. The appendices summarize salient points made in the conference. (JD)

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MENTORS AND NEW TEACHERS:

RESHAPING THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN MASSACHUSETTS

Report of the Wheelock College Conference

on Mentor Teacher Training

August 1-5, 1988

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MENTORS AND NEW TEACHERS:

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Report of the Wheelock College Conference
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Mieko Kamii and Susan Harris-Sharples[1]

INTRODUCTION

Once again, the educational system of America is under fire. Study commissions appointed by former Secretary of Education Bennett and the Carnegie Corporation, the Holmes Group, and others have voiced criticism and urgent concern about the quality of education provided for America's children, and especially about the quality of teaching found in schools. Guided by these reports, the Massachusetts Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation has recommended that the Commonwealth alter the manner in which it inducts new teachers into the profession, arguing that changes in teacher education and teacher preparation are critical to improving educational quality. These innovations promise to transform the teaching profession and public perceptions of education. But the recommended changes also raise a host of practical questions about implementation.

The heart of the Joint Task Force's recommendations are new procedures for certifying teachers in Massachusetts. Henceforth prospective teachers must complete an undergraduate liberal arts or science major and acquire 150 hours of student teaching experience, in conjunction with education courses related to their prospective teaching speciality. These new teachers will then be granted provisional certification for a period of up to five years. During this period, they

[1] The authors wish to thank Linda Braun, William Dandridge, Evelyn Hausslein, Judith Manthei, Richard Rogers, and Sarah Williams for their invaluable assistance in reading and commenting on a previous draft of this report.

must complete the requirements for their masters degrees in education in order to become eligible for full certification. Masters-level training is to include school-based clinical relationships with experienced mentor teachers. This contrasts with prior practices wherein new teachers received full certification after having completed their undergraduate training, without the full partnership of the schools and without having earned a masters degree.

Various models for mentoring new teachers are being explored throughout the nation, including programs in California, Kentucky, New Mexico, Ohio, New York City, and Washington, D.C. Each mentoring program has a unique way of addressing the relationship between mentors and their school districts. Each program has implications for changes in school cultures and changes in collegial relations both in and out of school buildings. And each trains and supports mentors in different ways. While the goals of these programs vary, all are concerned with improving the quality of both the teaching profession and the education provided for children.

In August of 1988, Wheelock College convened a group of college professors and elementary school classroom teachers, principals, and system-wide administrators for a week-long conference during which the participants grappled with three questions related to mentoring:

(1) What is the optimal relationship between a mentor and a newcomer?

(2) How can mentoring programs function effectively in schools?

(3) How should mentor teachers be trained?

The participants represented school districts both large and small, located in urban, suburban, and rural areas of Massachusetts. The discussions resulted in a series of suggestions for developing mentoring programs in the Commonwealth, programs which would capitalize on the knowledge base of experienced, highly competent teachers who can guide, nurture, assist, and support newcomers to the profession.

The primary goal of an effective mentoring program would be enhanced training for new teachers, but its effects would not end there. The Wheelock

Conference concluded that well-designed mentoring programs could reinvigorate the teaching profession generally and spark a wave of creativity in the relationships among teachers, their schools, and their communities. Mentoring programs would encourage both new and experienced teachers to be more reflective about their craft, more imaginative in their tasks. New teachers would grow professionally as they expand their repertoire of skills and strategies for working with children and parents. Experienced teachers would be stimulated to develop new ideas about instruction as they teach teachers, and they would garner recognition for their professional excellence without having to "put classroom teaching behind them." Thus a new constellation of possibilities for professional development would open for both new and seasoned teachers.

As the locus of professional training for new teachers shifts from the undergraduate classroom to the school, all personnel within the school building will share in the responsibilities and rewards of the newcomer's professional growth. An effective mentoring program must be a communal enterprise, drawing upon and fostering a collegiality that promises a climate in which all within the school find support from their colleagues and administrators for continued reflection, growth, and change.

DESIGNING A MENTORING PROGRAM

The advent of any major program brings with it changes in the way the affected organizations conduct business. Mentoring programs are no exception: they allow, and perhaps require teachers, principals, district superintendents, and teacher training institutions to redefine their roles in the teacher preparation process. Districts must develop a process for selecting mentors and training them. Schools need to prepare building personnel for the new roles. Support systems for mentors and newcomers alike must be created. New relationships with colleges and universities have to be forged. Finally, procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of specific programs on a continuing basis must be developed.

Because each school district has its own particular blend of resources and needs, the Wheelock Conference participants discussed guidelines for designing and implementing mentoring programs in situational as well as more generic terms. In the pages that follow, general guidelines applicable to all mentoring programs are presented. They are followed by suggestions for variations in program design that school districts might wish to consider in assessing their specific circumstances. Variables such as numbers of projected openings, numbers of experienced teachers, availability of school district support personnel, size and location of the district, a district's financial resources, its relationships with bargaining units, and agreements made with institutions of higher education, necessarily influence program decisions.

DEFINING NEW ROLES

The establishment of a mentoring program will precipitate a reshuffling of roles both within individual buildings and within the institutions currently responsible for teacher training and certification. Two new roles will be created under the new program, those of provisionally certified teacher and of mentor. In addition, other traditional roles will have to be redefined, including the principal's supervisory role and the relationships among experienced teachers working in the new mentor/newcomer setting. School districts, state educational agencies, and institutions of higher education must also make adjustments to accommodate mentoring programs.

The Role of Mentors

A mentor is an experienced teacher who trains and supports a less experienced, and in Massachusetts, a provisionally certified teacher. The role of the mentor is:

- to observe the newcomer's teaching;
- to reflect with the newcomer about teaching;
- to share information and consult with the newcomer;
- to interpret the school culture and its relationship to the wider community culture; and

- to link the newcomer with other teachers in the building.

The mentor is an advocate for the first year teacher in all areas of the school program and is primarily responsible for overseeing that individual's on-the-job learning and professional development.[1]

In collaboration with the principal and the masters-level advisors[2] the mentor is part of the newcomer's supervisory team. The mentor supports the newcomer as he or she addresses areas of weakness identified by the principal, the mentor, or the newcomer him- or herself. The mentor may suggest that the newcomer observe another outstanding teacher in the building, ask the newcomer to visit the mentor's classroom, or model specific teaching strategies in the newcomer's room (taking care not to undermine the newcomer's credibility with his or her students).

For mentoring programs to be successful, mentors have to take time away from their own classrooms to fulfill their mentoring responsibilities. Time must be set aside for the mentor to observe in the newcomer's classroom, and common times must be found during the school day for the mentor and newcomer to meet. Experience suggests that mentoring is more successful when the mentor and newcomer are in the same building, even if they teach children at different grade levels (Neufeld, 1988). Mentors and newcomers will naturally meet more frequently and more informally than is possible when the two teach in different schools. Additionally they will have the advantage of sharing a common school culture.

Personnel issues. The dynamics of mentoring relationships are necessarily influenced by a number of personnel variables and decisions: the mentor's

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[1] Subsequent to the Wheelock Conference, Theory into practice (27, 3, Summer 1988) published its themed issue on Mentoring Teachers. The lead article (Zimpher and Rieger, 1988) underscores the importance of several topics identified and discussed at the Wheelock Conference, particularly the supportive role of the mentor teacher, the need for mentors to be carefully selected and matched with newcomers, and the need for mentors to be properly trained and assisted.

[2] The JTTP recommends that first-year teachers who are enrolled in masters degree programs be assigned both an education and a liberal arts or sciences advisor by the college or university. Together with the mentor, these two faculty advisors would supervise the provisionally certified teacher's classroom and academic training, and eventually recommend the teacher for full certification.

length of tenure; whether the teacher is a full-time mentor, is granted released time for mentoring, or is forced to mentor entirely "on the fly"; and the number of newcomers in the mentor's charge. For example, full-time mentors would presumably work with several newcomers, while part-time mentors who continue to have classroom responsibilities could work with no more than one or two newcomers, depending upon the school's needs and the amount of released time made available for this purpose. Other personnel variables center on the newcomer and his or her circumstances: whether this is the newcomer's first year or a subsequent year of teaching, and whether the newcomer is enrolled at the same time in a masters program. The mentor's relationship with a newcomer who is a second-year teacher, or with a more experienced teacher who has arrived from out-of-state or out-of-district, could be of a less intense or more casual nature.

Decisions regarding how long a teacher holds the position of mentor, how much of the teacher's time is allocated for mentoring functions, and how many people he or she supervises at any given time, are all influenced by practical considerations such as the size of the school district, and both the supply of trained mentors in a given building and the number of people requiring mentoring in that building. But these decisions are also influenced by program purposes and goals.

Mentoring programs can be designed for purposes other than inducting new teachers. The goal of mentoring programs in California is to encourage veteran teachers to remain in the classroom. As such, mentors are given considerable latitude to pursue a variety of education-related activities concurrently with their sixty percent teaching load, and they are allowed to retain their positions as mentors for as long as they wish. In contrast, the goal of a mentoring program in Washington, D.C. is to assist new teachers; in Toledo, Ohio it is to evaluate the job performance of first-year teachers. These programs limit the full-time mentor's length of tenure to two and three years, respectively. It should be noted that limited tenure better supports collegiality, especially in buildings where many experienced teachers have been trained to become mentors, and where staff are committed to the mentoring concept.

Whether or not teachers receive an additional stipend for mentoring deserves careful consideration. It can be argued that paying mentors stipends acknowledges the contributions of experienced teachers without creating a merit pay system. Indeed many Wheelock Conference participants favored giving mentors either stipends or additional funds for professional development expenses. Additionally, negotiated contractual agreements may already specify that teachers are to be compensated for taking on added responsibilities. On the other hand, additional stipends create financial inequities and status distinctions that may prove demoralizing for teachers who are not mentors. Thus it may interfere with collegiality and undermine the concept of shared mentoring throughout the school building (Devaney, 1987; Shulman and Colbert, 1987). It bears mentioning that in districts where mentors receive additional stipends and are mentors for unlimited periods of time, individuals tend to hold on to their positions, often beyond the point where their enthusiasm for and interest in mentoring has waned.

Decisions concerning whether individuals mentor on a full- or part-time basis are influenced by budget, availability of substitutes, flexibility of schedules (greater at the secondary than at the elementary level), degree of team teaching, strength of the principal's commitment to the program, and the size of the school district. How many first-year newcomers should a full-time mentor supervise at any given time? In Washington, D.C. a full-time mentor may work with up to ten new teachers per year, and this seems to be the upper limit. Can a mentor work with first-year teachers and simultaneously supervise teachers in their second year or beyond? It would seem so, but in Washington, D.C., the principal assumes full supervisory responsibility for second-year teachers.

For part-time mentors, the amount of released time during school hours that are set aside for thoughtful planning and reflection with the newcomer is critical. The Wheelock Conference participants thought that a released time of twenty percent per newcomer would be necessary, for should a mentor have less than that, the quality of supervision would necessarily decline and mentoring would be in danger of becoming little more than answering routine questions.

High quality mentoring lasts for more than one year. However, the mentor-mentee relationship is qualitatively different during the subsequent

years of teaching. First-year teachers need much more intense interactions with their mentors than do those who have already been inducted into the profession. As was suggested above, the first year of mentoring might involve a specified amount of released time. In the second and subsequent years the relationship would continue, but meetings could occur during after-school hours or on a more casual basis.

Relationship to masters degree program. The mentor's role is affected by whether or not the newcomer is concurrently enrolled in a masters degree program, and the extent of collaboration between the school district and the masters-granting institution. Mentors of newcomers who are simultaneously enrolled in masters programs will need to collaborate with higher education faculty in those institutions. In some instances, the collaborating institutions might grant adjunct faculty status to mentors (see The Role of the Colleges and Universities, below). Some districts, and particularly those located at some distance from institutions of higher education, may wish to collaborate with colleges or universities to design mentoring programs that would give their newcomers "life experience" credits towards a masters degree, once the newcomers enroll in those institutions' masters degree programs. When there is collaboration, the length and intensity of the mentoring relationship would be defined by agreement between the district and the masters-granting institution.

Inevitably some mentors will be working with newcomers who are neither enrolled in a masters degree program, nor whose districts have formed collaboration agreements with colleges or universities. In instances where collaborative arrangements have not been made, the district (with the state's approval) would determine the length and intensity, and therefore the quality of the mentoring relationship.

Supervision and evaluation. There is an ongoing debate regarding whether evaluation ought to be a part of the mentor's supervisory role. The research literature draws a distinction between clinical supervision which uses formative evaluation, and supervision which uses summative evaluation for employment decisions. The former is seen as supportive of newcomers, and the latter is seen as judgmental (Sergiovanni, 1982). There are trade-offs in deciding to include or reject the evaluation voice.

Those who argue against the evaluative role say that mentors, as supervisors, should have input into whether or not certification is granted, but they should not be placed in the position of making final recommendations. Proponents of this viewpoint, with which the overwhelming majority of the Wheelock Conference participants concurred, argue that the mentor's primary role is to support the newcomer's efforts. A crucial component of support is the bond of trust between mentor and newcomer, a trust that encourages the newcomer to take risks. This trust would be jeopardized if the mentor were viewed as an evaluator. Accordingly, the principal should remain the primary evaluator who makes all employment decisions. The mentor would act as an advocate for the newcomer, but not as a judge.

Advocates for inclusion of the evaluation voice in supervision argue that the credibility of the mentor as the newcomer's advocate is undermined if the mentor has no voice in career decisions for the newcomer. Proponents of this position point to the possibility of the newcomer's being fired, and say that as an advocate for the newcomer, the mentor should be one of the decision-makers. Should the newcomer be fired, his or her entree into certification would be jeopardized. Thus the mentor should have an equal voice in deciding whether or not the newcomer should be retained. Those who espouse this viewpoint add that if mentoring is going to empower teachers and help raise the status of their profession, then mentors need to take on the role of gatekeepers for their profession. Indeed, the mentor teacher program in Toledo, Ohio was initiated by the teachers' union for these very reasons.

When both supervisory and evaluative functions are assigned to one person, mentor programs are likely to experience problems (Stroble and Cooper, 1988). If mentoring is to include evaluation, then at some point mentors must be prepared to shift from the role of supportive advocate to that of the newcomer's evaluator. To be able to differentiate these roles and to make this shift, mentor teachers had best be well trained in clinical supervision and communication skills.

The Role of Newcomers

A newcomer is a person who is beginning his or her teaching career. In Massachusetts newcomers would presumably have earned their provisional certification by having accumulated at least 150 hours of supervised classroom experience, and by having acquired a knowledge base commensurate with the level of provisional certification (i.e., early childhood teachers would have a background in child development, and elementary teachers would be knowledgeable in the subject matter taught in elementary classrooms). Experienced, provisionally certified out-of-state teachers would also be newcomers but ones who would need less intense mentoring.

Newcomers are expected to seek out advice and guidance from their mentors on questions arising from their dealings with classroom issues, teaching processes, and curriculum. The mentor is the newcomer's guide to the school culture, and thus newcomer and mentor should seek to establish a relationship so that together, they can negotiate aspects of school culture ranging from securing custodial support to organizing field trips.

Newcomers are responsible for teaching their own classes. However they also need to have released time and/or a reduced teaching load so that there is time to meet with their mentors, observe other teachers, and reflect on their own teaching. From ten to twenty percent released time would seem necessary to have sufficient time to observe and reflect and to develop the relationship with the mentor.

Newcomers are expected to participate in a weekly support seminar with other newcomers from the same building or the same school district. These seminars could be conducted by a mentor, a college or university faculty member, or someone designated by the district superintendent. The seminar would provide a forum for reflective discussions -- a "safe" atmosphere for sharing questions, doubts, and concerns. The seminar could be held at the school, at the district's central office, or at a nearby college or university (see Training and Supporting Newcomers in Their New Roles, below).

In their second and subsequent years, newcomers would continue to work with their mentors but in a less intense, less formal, less structured way. Neither newcomer nor mentor would be given released time for this continued relationship. Although second- and third-year teachers would not be expected to attend a weekly support seminar, they may wish to meet periodically with their mentors or cohorts.

An out-of-state newcomer who is an experienced teacher has a relationship with a mentor that is more akin to that of the second-year newcomer: less intense, less formal, and less structured.

The Role of Principals and Other Supervisory Personnel

Principals would assume primary responsibility for creating the climate in which mentoring programs will work. Principals would not only encourage teachers in their buildings to become mentors, but they would facilitate collaboration among mentors and their non-mentor colleagues. Principals would create the process by which mentors are selected and matches are made between mentors and newcomers. They would find ways to create released time for newcomers and mentors, and manage and protect this released time by arranging with other staff members and other administrators in the district for substitute teachers to cover the mentors' and newcomers' classes during their released time. They would also communicate program goals to parents and solicit their help and support in ensuring program success (see The Role of Parents, below). In short, principals would bear the ultimate responsibility for the success of the mentoring program in their schools.

The principal or designated supervisor (e.g., secondary school department head, or director of special education) would share with the mentor the supervision of the newcomer, and would monitor the progress that the newcomer makes. For example, the principal might observe the newcomer's class and identify areas of weakness for which the mentor's guidance or assistance is requested. Similarly, the mentor might consult with the principal about questions concerning the newcomer's performance.

Ultimately, principals have the primary evaluative authority with respect to hiring and firing all teachers, including newcomers. Principals would retain authority over employment decisions, even though mentors, along with higher education advisors, would have roles in recommending the provisionally certified teacher for full certification.

The Role of Parents

An important aspect of creating a school climate in which a mentoring program will work involves communication with parents. Parents are likely to object to their child's being placed in a new and inexperienced teacher's class. They might also be concerned about the amount of time their child's teacher, whether mentor or newcomer, spends away from the classroom.

To alleviate parental fears, it is important to include a parent component in the mentoring program from the outset. At the very least, principals must communicate the program goals to parents. Far better, principals can invite parents to become actively involved in the mentoring program in various ways, including participating in the selection of mentors, volunteering in the mentors' and newcomers' classrooms, and being part of the program evaluation process. These forms of participation can become vehicles for communicating the program's goals and expectations and for engaging parental support. Parents would be able to see that their children's needs are not being ignored and that the children's learning is not being adversely affected, even when the mentor or newcomer leaves the classroom from time to time. Parents would hopefully understand that the mentoring program supports and upgrades the quality of teaching that children are experiencing in newcomers' classes.

The Role of the School District

Each school district would assume responsibility for designing a mentoring program which takes into account the community's needs and resources and its existing contractual agreements with the local teachers' union. The Wheelock Conference participants recommend that the program be designed by a community task force composed of principals, teachers, parents, a local

bargaining unit, and a college or university collaborator. The design would include:

- defining the roles of mentors and newcomers;
- specifying the selection, training, and on-going supports for mentors and newcomers;
- describing how program evaluation will occur; and
- designating the participants in each program aspect.

Districts should be encouraged to share their designs with one another. Smaller districts should be encouraged to collaborate with other nearby districts.

Ideally, funding for most aspects of the new mentoring program would be provided by the Commonwealth. But in the absence of state monies for vital elements of the program, the individual school districts would have to assume the financing burden. At the present time the Massachusetts Legislature is proposing that the state pay the cost of mentors' stipends and that the districts pay for their newcomers' salaries. But answers to two questions -- who will pay for mentor training, and who will pay for released time costs -- remain undetermined. A school district might have to bear the cost of hiring permanent substitutes to make possible the necessary released time that the program demands. To some extent districts might be able to reallocate funds already budgeted, such as including a mentoring component in their professional development budgets and programs. However, funding for mentor training might have to be supplemented by grants from private sources such as businesses and foundations (see The Role of the State, below).

The superintendent or his/her designee from the personnel office must negotiate an agreement with the local teachers' bargaining unit regarding the mentor's job description. Specific issues would include: the procedure for selection of mentors; the granting of additional compensation and released time; and the description of supervisory responsibilities, including involvement in job evaluation. In some instances, collective bargaining will determine whether the best of a district's experienced teachers will become mentors, and whether the program as a whole will succeed.

A proposal describing the district's mentoring program would then be submitted to the state for approval (see The Role of the State, below).

The Role of Colleges and Universities

Currently faculty involved in the training of teachers are primarily found in education departments. In contrast the Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation recommends increased involvement of liberal arts and sciences faculty, in both a larger share of the undergraduate student's educational experience, and potentially in his or her masters program.

At present prospective teachers typically gain their knowledge of classroom issues and teaching skills in undergraduate education courses and student teaching experiences. The role of the college generally ends before the student becomes a full-time professional. Under the Joint Task Force plan, the undergraduate practica (albeit in truncated form) will continue but will be merely the first step in an expanded educational process that must culminate in obtaining a masters degree. Colleges and universities must henceforth see themselves as continuing participants in the professional lives of full-time teachers. What full-time teachers expect of colleges, and what colleges must be prepared to provide, must be thoroughly re-examined and re-crafted in light of these changes.

Collaboration between school districts and masters-granting institutions should make it easier for a district's provisionally certified teachers to complete the requirements for their masters degree. These institutions might grant credits toward the masters degree for the first-year newcomer's weekly seminar, either by making the seminar part of the masters degree program, or by granting "life experience" credit for participation in the mentoring program (see Creating Collaborative Agreements between Districts and Institutions of Higher Education, below).

When provisionally certified teachers are enrolled in a masters degree program, there will naturally be closer relationships among college and university faculty, newcomers, and mentors. In some instances, the mentors

may have adjunct faculty status and be responsible for the masters degree level of classroom supervision of the newcomer. In other instances a college Education Department faculty member may do this type of supervision and therefore hold periodic meetings with the newcomer and his or her mentor.

College liberal arts and sciences faculty could serve as subject-matter consultants to entire districts, to particular schools, or to specific mentor-newcomer pairs. These faculty members could meet periodically with mentors, newcomers, and perhaps other teachers in specific schools to discuss approaches to problems and methods of inquiry used in their respective disciplines. Teachers in schools that have close relationships with college faculty might invite a liberal arts or sciences consultant into their classrooms to observe lessons, to consult on specific curriculum units, or to answer questions that they and the children have. These forms of participation can benefit classroom teachers and higher education faculty alike: teachers would deepen their understanding of content areas, and consulting faculty would increase their awareness of the complexities and realities of public school teaching. College and university faculty would become sensitive to the challenges of making vast amounts of knowledge accessible to children, and they would become more thoughtful about which aspects of their own disciplines and their own courses are most critical for would-be-teachers to understand well.

School districts would therefore be well advised to collaborate with one or more institutions of higher education from the initial phases of program design. College and university personnel can assist school districts in designing mentoring programs, writing proposals to the state, and perhaps securing foundation or corporate funding for their training programs. Once the mentoring program is in place, higher education faculty can train teachers to be mentors (see Training for New Roles, below). They may help design and teach the weekly support seminars for newcomers and the monthly support meetings for mentors. College faculty can also support districts undergoing change by serving as mediators or external consultants when conflicts among participants in mentoring programs arise.

The Role of the State

The state must assume responsibility for promoting mentoring programs (see Preparing for New Roles, below). It should articulate broad objectives and set minimum standards as guidance for local districts as they design their mentoring programs. The state also bears responsibility for monitoring the quality of mentoring programs as well as for financing some components of the districts' programs.

The Wheelock Conference participants urge that the Commonwealth write mentoring program guidelines in the least restrictive terms, so that individual districts with varying resources and demographics (e.g., size and composition of population, tax base and wealth, proximity to colleges and universities, urban/suburban/rural communities) are able to design thoughtful processes for inducting new teachers. This would allow for autonomy and responsibility within school districts while retaining some program standardization.

The Commonwealth's mechanism for monitoring the design and quality of mentoring programs lies in its authority to approve districts' mentoring proposals. The state must be charged with ensuring that the induction process is thoughtful and complete, and that a supportive structure is in place for new teachers in every district in the Commonwealth. The state should also be responsible for yearly program evaluations, because evaluation is indispensable to program improvement.

In addition to covering the costs of disseminating information regarding mentoring programs to districts, the state would optimally provide financial support to districts for:

- designing mentoring programs;
- training mentors and other school personnel;
- covering released time for mentors and newcomers;
- supporting seminars for mentors and newcomers; and
- providing stipends for mentors.

Having mandated important changes in teacher certification requirements, the state should not allow the quality of mentoring programs to suffer because of inadequate funding. That would defeat the intent of the Joint Task Force's recommendations. In categories where it foresees that districts rather than the state will shoulder the burden (e.g., the costs of mentor training and release time), the state might entice private sources such as businesses and foundations to create an assistance fund from which districts may draw, or it might help individual districts to contact these sources directly.

The state should educate districts about program design and program implementation options available to them. One possibility is to schedule periodic meetings for superintendents and principals from several districts so that at an early phase they could discuss design alternatives, and later, the similarities and differences in their implementation strategies.

PREPARING FOR NEW ROLES

Initially the state should convene superintendents, principals, and interested teachers to share with them its mentoring vision. The mentoring program itself should be described in sufficient detail so that attendees will understand the mentoring concept well. Although the state would plan the meeting, specific presentations could be made by a variety of people, including representatives of colleges, unions, the Department of Education, and professional organizations. This initial orientation should be scheduled for delivery several times in different locations around the state.

The presentation should consist of a half-day overview of the vision and orientation to mentoring. It should be mandatory for teachers who want to become mentors,[1] for principals who will have newcomers requiring mentors in their schools, and for superintendents whose districts will have a mentoring program. In this meeting the philosophy of the program should be explained,

[1] In addition to the regional sessions, some districts may want to create their own overview and orientation sessions for potential mentor teachers in their districts. In such cases the regional presentation could be optional for these teachers.

followed by a description of the processes, knowledge, and skills crucial for successful mentoring:

- the knowledge base of teaching;
- communication skills;
- supervision and observation skills;
- knowledge of adult learning and adult development; and
- knowledge of school culture.

The program should conclude with suggestions for ways in which districts can design mentoring programs and alternative possibilities for the delivery of mentor training.

This orientation session should be envisioned as a "call to action" rather than as a dictation of rigid, specified regulations. It is intended to help school district personnel begin to think about their individual district needs and resources so that they are better able to articulate their goals and objectives, design their programs, and thus write their proposals for mentor training. The session is also intended to entice teachers to become mentors.

TRAINING FOR NEW ROLES

Training Teachers to Become Qualified Mentors: Content of the Training

After the orientation session, mentor teacher training would consist of a five-day institute focusing on the processes, knowledge, and skills crucial to mentoring. The Wheelock Conference recommends that the content of this training include day-long sessions on each of the areas specified above: the knowledge base of teaching; communication skills; supervision and observation skills; adult learning and adult development; and school cultures. (Others have suggested that similar content be covered in a series of ten sessions [Cutler, 1988]).

Knowledge base of teaching: focus on language of teaching. In order for the mentor and newcomer to communicate effectively, they need to establish a shared language to talk about and apply their knowledge of teaching. The

knowledge base itself is composed of: strategies for effective teaching such as developing routines, attending to pacing and timing, using space wisely, and giving effective feedback to children; instructional models that range from individualized instruction to whole classroom teaching; and classroom management techniques including clarifying expectations, getting and holding children's attention, and developing effective methods of discipline. Curriculum, another central aspect of teaching, includes identifying goals and objectives, developing and organizing learning experiences, and evaluating outcomes. Teachers should also be aware of alternative theories concerning learning and teaching, such as "effective teacher" research whi is behaviorist in orientation (e.g., M. Hunter and B. Rosenshein), the "art of teaching" which has an affective focus (e.g., E. Eisner), learning style theories with a developmental focus (e.g., M. Carbo and B. McCarthy), constructivist theories with a Piagetian base (e.g., H. Furth and C. Kamii), theories of multiple intelligences (H. Gardner), and eclectic orientations (J. Saphier).

Communication: focus on interpersonal and counseling skills. Communication skills include the ability to listen carefully to others, and to ask open-ended questions which allow participants to be reflective about their actions, experiences, and concerns. Such communication is indispensible for problem-solving. Mentors need to learn how to conduct conferences so that there is an open exchange of ideas, attitudes, and sentiments. Mentors need to be able to communicate to others what they have observed, including giving and receiving negative information. This often involves being able to view situations from multiple perspectives and resolve conflicts.

Supervision and observation: focus on classrooms. Mentors need to learn techniques for classroom observations necessary for effective supervision. This includes knowing what to look for, and how to record it in a literal manner so that it becomes a running record of the events that have occurred. Mentors also must make decisions about what is important to focus on throughout the year, as the newcomer gradually develops more sophisticated teaching strategies and techniques. Finally mentors should become skilled in techniques for sharing that information with the newcomer.

Adult learning and adult development: focus on individual development. Mentors must think about newcomers' as well as their own development from both a professional and an individual/personal perspective. Stages of professional as well as personal development have been described by many theorists. Sprinthall describes stages of student teaching that inform mentors about the developmental changes that occur in beginning teachers. Erikson's stages of development provide a framework for thinking about changes in adults' lives. These ideas should help mentors to conceptualize their roles and reponsibilities in mentoring and to understand the intricacies of their relationships with newcomers.

Negotiating the school culture: focus on being a change agent. The new mentoring role cannot be fully understood until its impact on the school culture, and the school culture's reciprocal influence on it has been explored. School cultures grow out of the collective values and beliefs of the members of the school community, and these in turn are influenced by the larger community culture. Diverse ethnic and racial subcultures leave indelible traces on community values. And socioeconomic variations help to explain one group's sense of entitlement, and another group's lack of empowerment, in making their voices heard by the schools. By analyzing the culture of the school and that of the wider community it serves, mentors will come to appreciate their role as change agents and to recognize why, in consequence, their relationships with others will change. Their impact on others, particularly their fellow teachers, will at times be positive and at times negative. Thus they need to develop strategies for dealing with people under the stress of change. They also need to foster new types of social interactions, within the school building and in the wider community, as evidenced most immediately and most frequently in home-school relationships.

Structure of the Training

The five-day mentor training institutes would be taught by college and university faculty, educational consultants, or other highly qualified individuals. They could be presented at regional Department of Education offices, sites selected by educational collaboratives or school consortia, college campuses,

central district offices, or conference centers. Individual districts may wish to grant incremental credit toward salary increases for participation in the institute, and/or collaborate with a college or university which would help design and deliver the institute, and grant graduate credit for its successful completion.

The five-day sessions should be offered many times, and in differing combinations of days, throughout the year. For example, the training could be offered in a five-day institute during the summer or during winter or spring vacations. The sessions might be offered sequentially, weekly or monthly, on Saturdays or weekday evenings. They should be held in sites that are convenient for the teachers in the district. For example regional offices of the Department of Education could be used. Districts that are close to a college or university campus might hold their training sessions there. Smaller districts might combine and hold joint training sessions at sites convenient to all personnel.

As Massachusetts begins its mentoring program, school systems will need to begin creating a pool of mentors. The Wheelock Conference recommends that the school districts begin mentor training up to three years before they implement the full program. This would enable potential mentors to practice their skills with each other and with their colleagues before the influx of a large number of provisionally certified teachers occurs.

Ongoing Training for Mentors

At the end of the five-day mentor training institute, individuals will be qualified to enter the pool of mentor applicants. Each potential mentor would decide whether this is a role that he or she wishes to assume. Through self-evaluation and in consultation with the training session instructors and the teachers' principals, potential mentors would decide whether or not to take on this new role.

Additional training modules. The Wheelock Conference recommends that after completing the five-day institute, potential mentors further expand their knowledge base in at least one of the five training areas specified above. Furthermore, some districts might require potential mentors to spend a year in a

peer observation and coaching program with other teachers before assuming a mentoring role. Individual districts might develop additional criteria which its mentors must meet.

Ongoing training can be delivered through district-college collaborations. These will take different forms depending upon proximity to each other and negotiated agreements regarding what services are desired, and whether college or university faculty can provide them. Higher education faculty members and consultants can provide additional training modules in each of the areas presented at the five-day institute. Seminars on state-of-the-art knowledge about a multitude of topics can also be led by college faculty or consultants, and in some cases knowledgeable mentors. For most mentors at least one module may be required. The state-of-the-art seminars would be open to mentors and newcomers alike and would be voluntary.

Mandatory support groups. College faculty can either directly provide or train selected mentor teachers to run monthly support meetings for mentors. The monthly support meetings would be required of all mentors, whereas most additional training modules would be optional as discussed above.

Support meetings would provide a forum for mentors to raise, analyze, and develop strategies to deal with issues that arise in working with newcomers. They would enable mentors to receive additional training in teaching adults, such as developing constructive ways to provide negative feedback. Through group discussions mentors would be able to assess their own levels of effectiveness, expand their vision about their roles, and compare ongoing mentoring experiences with one another. Finally, support meetings would solve isolation problems for those mentors in schools and/or districts that have only limited numbers of mentor/newcomer pairs.

In some cases, colleges and universities may wish to provide additional training for selected mentor teachers so that they become qualified to teach a masters program seminar to a group of newcomers. In this capacity, the mentor might become an adjunct faculty member at the institution granting the masters degree.

Training and Supporting Newcomers in Their New Roles

Most newcomers presumably come into the program with minimal background skills and therefore need support, guidance, and additional skill-building while in the process of teaching. They will receive their training on-site, in their classrooms, and while working with their mentors.

First-year newcomers often express the need for help with classroom management, procedural items, curriculum (most particularly reading and math), and communicating with children and parents (see Bermel, 1987). While these are of paramount importance, other areas also need to be addressed by newcomers: developing strategies for dealing with under-achieving students; becoming sensitive to the diversity of children in their classrooms; learning to work with parents in developing strong home-school relationships; and negotiating the school culture.

In order for this to occur, mentors and newcomers need to meet regularly to talk and reflect on the newcomer's teaching. One continuing agenda item should be the clarification of the newcomer's goals and objectives (for individual lessons, for curriculum units, for children's learning, and for the newcomer's learning) and plans for meeting them. Another agenda item is learning to articulate teaching strategies in a deliberate and conscious manner. In some programs newcomers have kept logs in which they have recorded their concerns, and these have formed the basis for the discussions with the mentor (New York City). In other programs mentors have kept the logs (Los Angeles). Newcomers also need observation time in their mentors' and other teachers' classrooms, so as to focus on areas identified as goals for new learning. Mentoring programs need to build in release time so that scheduled meetings and observations can occur and the relationship with the mentor can develop and thrive.

Throughout the first year, newcomers would be expected to participate in a weekly "Issues and Processes" seminar in which they meet with other newcomers to analyze their own teaching in relation to established bodies of knowledge, and to share experiences and support one another. The seminar

would be guided by a college professor, a mentor who has adjunct faculty status, or a mentor who has had additional training.

It was the presumption of the Joint Task Force that first-year teachers would simultaneously be enrolled in a masters program during the first year of teaching. For those enrolled in masters programs, the support seminar would be a credit-bearing course and would be conducted by a regular or adjunct faculty member. However, many first-year teachers in Massachusetts may be unable to both teach and be actively pursuing a masters degree. Therefore school systems need to design support seminars for these newcomers.

Colleges or universities may wish to designate specific school districts whose support seminars meet criteria specified by that institution. This would enable non-matriculated newcomers to receive waiver or "life experience" credit for that seminar, once they enroll in that institution's masters program. Such arrangements may be be vital for districts that are not in close proximity to institutions of higher learning, whose newcomers would find it all the more difficult to enroll in support seminars or masters-level courses that meet on college campuses.

The induction process would not end with the first year. The second and subsequent few years should bring added experience and confidence which enable teachers to be more reflective about their practices and their profession. It is possible that some newer teachers may wish to continue the support group on their own, informally, though not on a weekly basis. In these years the continuing relationship between the mentor and newcomer would undergo a transformation to that of being more co-equal colleagues. They would continue to meet on their own time, sharing ideas, supporting one another, and engaging in a professional dialogue that benefits them both. They might even engage in peer coaching within one another's classrooms. School districts should consider providing incentives to facilitate these continuing relationships.

SELECTING MENTOR TEACHERS AND MATCHING THEM WITH NEWCOMERS

Individual school districts would be ultimately responsible for selecting their mentors. There are multiple ways that teachers who have completed the five-day mentor training institute might demonstrate their competence to be mentors and therefore become part of the pool of potential mentors. The criteria for entering the mentoring pool should be neither too rigid nor too arbitrary. Although mere attendance at the five-day institute is not sufficient, overly restrictive criteria will not yield the variety of mentors necessary for making optimal matches with newcomers. It should be noted that districts should involve the collective bargaining unit in decisions regarding selection criteria for mentor teachers.

Principals would oversee the process of matching mentors with newcomers, though perhaps in consultation with others. Some principals may convene committees composed of teachers and parents, while others may rely on written resumes and/or personal interviews.

Several considerations are foremost in matching specific mentors with specific newcomers. The most important appears to be that they work in the same building, since proximity facilitates communication. Although it would appear that it is optimal to have the mentor and newcomer teach at the same or similar grade level, this is less critical than that they be in the same building. However for teachers of specialty subjects such as physical education, music, and art, and particularly in the elementary grades, mentors from other buildings may have to be used. (It has been suggested that age and gender differences could also make a difference [Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986]).

To the extent possible, it is important that an interpersonal and philosophical match between mentor and newcomer be made. This can be accomplished through one of several means: the mentor can be involved in the hiring process; potential mentors and newcomers can meet informally before assignments are made; the newcomer might fill out some type of self-assessment document that would provide information about his or her philosophical bent and supervisory needs. Ultimately the principal will most likely assume

responsibility for making the assignment: providing a mentor for every newcomer, and introducing mentors and newcomers to each other.

CREATING SPECIFIC MENTORING PROGRAMS

Writing Proposals to the State

After members of the district have attended the initial half-day overview of the state's vision and orientation to mentoring, their next task would be to design a mentoring program specific to the district's needs and resources. The proposal would be sent to the state for approval and funding. The proposal should outline:

- the mentor and newcomer's roles;
- the training of potential mentors;
- the selection of mentors and assignment of mentors to newcomers;
- the support systems for mentors and newcomers;
- the provision of stipends, compensation, and released time; and
- the program evaluation.

Collaboration between districts and a college or university in writing the proposal might be helpful. The following section highlights some advantages of collaboration.

Creating Collaborative Agreements between Districts and Institutions of Higher Education

It would be beneficial to both districts and institutions of higher education to enter into collaborative agreements from the outset. For districts, collaboration provides a mechanism for designing and implementing training and support programs for mentors. It also provides an avenue for the district's newcomers to earn the masters degrees upon which full certification depends. For colleges and universities, the mentor programs would become a first step in building relationships with new teachers who are potential masters degree candidates. In addition, liberal arts and sciences faculty who have traditionally maintained

their distance from the public schools, and who have not consciously participated in the training of teachers, would be called upon to make connections between their own teaching and classroom teachers' teaching, and between their own students' learning and children's learning (Stark and Lowther, 1988; Yoe, 1987).

By entering into a collaboration with institutions of higher education, districts could procure resources and personnel for training mentors and newcomers. College faculty could conduct the five-day mentor training institutes or train district personnel to run them. Higher education faculty could teach the training modules designed to provide greater depth of content than that presented during the five-day institute. Such content could be delivered through either established masters level courses or specially designed modules offered on campus, at a regional district office, or a centrally located school building. Higher education faculty could lead, or train others to lead the on-going support seminars for mentors. Graduate schools might design a course to teach school personnel to be trainers of mentors.

Collaboration would also be beneficial to the district's newcomers. For those who are enrolled in a masters degree program, the required weekly "Issues and Processes" seminar would be presented by the college or a local mentor with adjunct faculty status, and could be integrated into the first year of the regular masters degree requirements. For newcomers in their first year of teaching who are not yet enrolled in a masters degree program (as might be the case for teachers whose districts lie at some distance from a masters-granting institution), the prospect of applying the college-approved weekly seminar experience as "waiver credit" or "life experience credit" toward a masters degree program might attract them to the collaborating institution.

Collaboration poses at least three other potential benefits for institutions of higher education. First, collaborations between higher education institutions and school districts could build bridges between the vineyard and the ivory tower, thus providing access for college faculty into public schools and for public school teachers into colleges. Two complementary benefits would accrue. On the one hand liberal arts and sciences faculty would have a chance to influence the content of what is being taught, and how it is being taught to children. At the

same time these faculty would have the opportunity to learn about the realities of schools, and to lend a hand in ensuring that all children -- and minority and immigrant children in particular -- have access to the best talents that colleges and universities can provide.

The second potential benefit is that districts will take on a larger portion of the responsibility for supervising new teachers which heretofore has been borne by the colleges and universities. By receiving joint supervision from the mentor and university-based education advisor, the newcomer would be well positioned to make quick connections between theory and practice. Finally, collaborations provide a forum for joint teacher-researcher endeavors such as investigating specific aspects of teaching or specific aspects of children's learning.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

No program can become effective, remain effective, or adapt itself to changing circumstances unless subjected to continuous evaluation. Moreover, the very process of evaluation provides yet another opportunity for consultation among all of the program's participants and the cultivation of a stronger sense of communal involvement in the program's success. Therefore evaluation is an indispensable aspect of any effective mentoring program and should be designed and implemented with as much care as any other element.

As each component of the mentoring program is implemented, it should be evaluated, first to improve that specific program element, and second to consider implications for other aspects of the program. For example, a district that collaborates with an institution of higher education in writing its proposal to the state would want to review the benefits of that specific collaboration before making its final decisions about expanding the relationship. Similarly the college or university would want to determine whether the collaboration was yielding positive results from the standpoint of its own goals, expectations, and institutional understanding of the purposes of collaboration. It would want to use the evaluation data to restructure problematic areas and build on positive outcomes.

The phases of the mentoring program that should be assessed are:

- the initial orientation meeting organized by the state;
- the writing of proposals by the districts;
- the five-day training institute for potential mentors;
- the selection and matching of mentors and newcomers;
- the mentoring relationship over the course of the school year; and
- the ongoing support groups and seminars associated with it.

Additionally interactions among persons directly involved in the mentoring program with other members of the school culture should be reviewed periodically during the year. Finally, the many areas of collaboration and interaction between school and higher education faculty, and between districts and masters-granting institutions, should be assessed.

The effectiveness of the mentoring program in its entirety should be evaluated at the end of each year. Newcomers, mentors, principals or other designated supervisory personnel, parents, superintendents and, where collaborations have been established, college and university faculty should be asked to provide assessment of whether, from their perspectives, the program accomplished what it set out to do, and if it fell short, which aspects of the program need slight, extensive, or no modification, and in what direction. Evaluators would want to know whether different participants perceived long-term benefits that outweighed the burdens of the program, such as costs in time, energy, and good will. Burdens include challenges not only to the well-being of the school culture but parental confidence in the district's ability to deliver quality education for their children.

Mentors and newcomers should assess the adequacy of the training and support they received. Mentors should evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of the five-day training institutes, and the utility of the monthly support group meetings and the state-of-the-art seminars. Newcomers would evaluate the mentoring experience, assessing the scope and thoroughness of guidance, and whether the support received was through the "Issues and Processes" seminar or support groups was sufficient to advance their professional competence. Both

mentors and newcomers should be asked how they used their released time and whether the amount of time was sufficient for their purposes.

The Joint Task Force's vision of mentoring included new opportunities for the professional growth of both seasoned and new teachers, providing occasion for them to develop reflective and imaginative as well as effective teaching strategies. Feedback on the program's progress in achieving these aims is extremely important. In what ways did the mentoring experience promote thinking and reflection about teaching? In what ways did mentors experience professional growth and a sense of themselves as knowledgeable and committed professionals? Does the newcomer's view of his or her own professional growth in the past year lead to an anticipation that successive years will bring new challenges and opportunities for further development? Principals should assess the ways in which the mentoring program raised the level of professionalism within the building. Did the program really facilitate collegiality, and if not, what remedies should be tried?

The impact of the mentoring program on the wider school culture should also be an important element of assessment (see Appendix C). Did the program promote cooperation among all teachers or generate attitudes of exclusion and division? Was an appropriate role found for parents, raising parental involvement and satisfaction? Did the use of substitute teachers during the mentors' and newcomers' released time affect the attitudes of children about their school and themselves? In general, did all those affected by the program feel that the burdens and rewards, praise and blame, were distributed equitably?

The districts will want to know what factors influence the community's perception of the mentoring program. For example, have the parents of children in the mentors' and newcomers' classes been supportive, hostile, or indifferent? Which specific features of the program have they liked and disliked? Districts must, of course, distinguish among the very different circumstances in elementary, middle or junior high, and high schools.

Districts which have developed collaborations with colleges and universities will want to assess the utility of those relationships by identifying which aspects worked well and which parts need revision. Similarly, colleges and universities

will be interested in which aspects of the collaborative relationships proved worthwhile and which were not cost-effective.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

As part of its sweeping vision of a new way to prepare the Commonwealth's teachers, the Joint Task Force on Teacher Preparation proposed the development of a core of mentor teachers who would supervise and support provisionally certified teachers during their first year in the classroom. It left open many questions for others to answer: how mentors should be selected, trained, and linked with newcomers; what mentor training should consist of and how it might be delivered; how districts located many miles from masters-granting institutions might establish close ties with these collaborating institutions; how relationships among school-based mentors and college-based education and liberal arts advisors might be established for provisionally certified teachers who are <u>not</u> enrolled in masters degree programs; how bridges between education, liberal arts, and sciences faculties in large universities can be constructed, and how district-university collaborations might be framed; what funding options might be available for crucial aspects of the program which the state assumes the districts will shoulder; and so forth.

The challenge for the state is to develop guidelines for mentoring programs which are stringent enough to ensure high quality while at the same time flexible enough for implementation in each and every district, and each and every school in the Commonwealth. The state must acquaint the districts with alternative mentoring program designs, and ensure that a supportive structure is in place for new teachers throughout the Commonwealth. The state must ensure that funds for supporting mentor training have been secured so that districts do not bear the entire cost of training. The state must also ensure that an evaluation process is in place that provides data for program improvement and change.

The challenge for school districts is to design training programs for their mentor teachers, to develop support systems for their mentors and newcomers, and to create collaborative agreements with colleges and universities so that

their new, provisionally certified teachers can progress towards full certification. To meet these challenges they must realistically assess their needs and resources, develop strategies for negotiating program elements with the teachers' bargaining unit, and explain their mentoring programs to their communities and outside agencies so that they can secure the necessary support and funds for ensuring program success.

The challenge for principals is to ensure that the mentoring program works effectively in their schools. Principals must encourage experienced teachers to become part of the mentor teacher pool, and then select mentors from among the pool who appropriately match the needs of newcomers in their schools. Principals, or other individuals whom they designate to act in their stead, share supervisory responsibilities for new teachers with the mentors. Principals have to hire substitute teachers to cover newcomers' and mentors' classes during their released time. Finally, because principals are responsible for managing school culture issues, they must create mechanisms for solving problems when they arise.

The challenge for mentor teachers is to make adjustments in their priorities to accommodate the needs of provisionally certified teachers. They must focus on adult development and learning as well as children's development and learning. They must find ways to comfortably let go of their own groups of children from time to time. And they must learn to deal with the skepticism of their own colleagues who are critical of the way they are teaching new teachers.

The challenges for colleges and universities are several. First, undergraduate faculty from departments of education as well as departments traditionally unconcerned with professional training must evaluate their course offerings and course content to accommodate the needs of liberal arts and sciences majors who want to teach. Second, graduate schools of education must redesign their masters degree programs, and do so in conjunction with several schools and school districts. Third, it is incumbent upon college and university faculty to become involved in the training of mentors. In collaboration with school districts, institutions of higher education must develop the training institutes for potential mentors, as well as design courses for more in-depth coverage in each of the areas deemed crucial to successful mentoring: the knowledge base of

teaching; communication skills; supervision and observation skills; adult learning and adult development; and the social and political environments that comprise the culture of schools. These training institutes and courses must be offered at times and in locations which are convenient for teachers. Fourth, education faculty must teach or train others to teach the weekly "Issues and Processes" seminars for newcomers, and lead the monthly support group meetings for mentors.

Much attention has been focused recently on the crisis in America's schools, and rightly so. Less frequently do we reflect on how often when America itself has been in crisis, it has insisted that its schools shoulder the burden of response and step forward as the vanguard of social change. Whether the crisis has been racial desegregration, the collapse of the traditional family, the absorption of new immigrants, the debilitations of urban and rural poverty, or the traumas of drug abuse, the school system has been asked to do more and more -- while the public has often demanded as well that the schools spend less and less. By no means have the ranks of teachers and administrators emerged unscathed or unchanged from these burdens, and yet through it all, the education profession has continued to attract women and men of uncommon dedication and perseverance.

Now the Joint Task Force envisions another challenge to the schools. In anticipation of the educational needs of children in the twenty-first century, it is asking that schools become agents of change "to make teaching a major profession." In a single stroke, the Joint Task Force has challenged educational institutions at every level to act in concert and create structures that will broaden the appeal of teaching to talented, well-educated people. Implied as well is the mandate to train these new teachers in the professional values and attitudes -- the uncommon dedication and perseverance -- that have enabled the nation's teachers to cope with twentieth century social crises.

While acknowledging the scope of these challenges, the Wheelock Conference participants were nevertheless confident that mentor programs could be devised that would not only promote the professional training of newcomers, but as importantly, would create a climate of collegiality in which

all teachers could find support from one another, administrators, and parents for continued reflection, growth, and change.

The guidelines set out in this conference report are offered as the broadest sketch of an educational structure to address the many challenges discussed in these pages. Well-designed mentoring programs that carefully consider the many facets of mentor/newcomer relationships and that train and support mentors in critical ways, have the potential for transforming not only new teachers' experiences but the perception of seasoned teachers regarding their profession as a whole.

The spirit of collaboration encouraged by the Joint Task Force was reflected in the composition of the Wheelock Conference, whose participants represented the various players who must work together to create effective mentoring programs. And in that spirit of collaboration, old boundaries, old presumptions, old ways of conducting business were repeatedly challenged during the five-day conference. If the participants' energy, imagination, and willingness to confront new tasks are indicative of the resources found throughout the education system, then the Commonwealth's schools and institutions of higher education are surely up to their new challenges.

As mentoring programs are phased in, problems and complexities not uncovered during the conference will surely emerge -- and creative solutions will have to be found. Thus the labor and skill of many more hands must be set to the task before the structure will stand, for the benefit of the Commonwealth's teachers and the education of its children.

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APPENDIX A

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF MENTORING

Goal: To provide a structured and supportive induction process for new teachers, one that builds upon the insights, knowledge, and experiences of veteran teachers.

Objectives:

Mentors will:

Help first-year teachers bridge the gap between university, theory-based learning and school-based, practical applications;

Become knowledgeable in areas central to the mentoring role, including

- models of teaching,
- communication skills,
- supervision and observation skills,
- school culture, and
- adult learning and development;

Share ideas concerning how children learn, teaching strategies, management techniques, and other issues;

Articulate beliefs and goals clearly, particularly those related to children, including,

- building self-confidence,
- fostering curiosity, including asking and finding answers,
- creating a cooperative learning community among teacher and children;

Help newcomers ease into classroom teaching by helping them with

- routines, supplies, procedures,
- "how-to" suggestions for getting organized,
- calendar and school schedule, and
- curriculum;

Provide newcomer with an active role model, advisor, listener, and resource person;

Establish a relationship in which the newcomer can:

- confide in and share thoughts with the mentor,
- ideally establish a relationship that evolves into one between colleagues/peers;

Assess newcomer's level of professional development (as perceived by newcomer as well as mentor); forms starting point for charting future growth.

Goal: To create a collegial relationship that provides support, enhances the esteem of new teachers, and facilitates their becoming independent, effective, and productive professionals.

Objectives:

First-year teacher sees education as being life-long endeavor, and teaching profession as having life-long career possibilities;

Year-long program is viewed in developmental framework: as new teacher gains competence and confidence, he/she tackles more sophisticated questions and issues;

Mentor guides rather than directs: relationship is balanced and is not overprotective; newcomer's own ideas are incorporated into planning;

New teacher feels he/she can make mistakes and grow; is willing to take risks;

New teacher learns to reflect, problem-solve, and be analytic about own activities; learns to critique own teaching practices objectively;

New teacher feels comfortable experimenting with various ways of disciplining, and various methods of teaching; does not feel he or she is searching for the "right way" but rather building own repertoire;

New teacher feels comfortable enough to try materials, and teaching or disciplining strategies that might be foreign to the school culture;

Mentor guides development of relations with faculty, induction into school culture, and acquaintance with wider community.

Goal: To establish a relationship that is reciprocal, in which each person contributes to, and takes responsibility for what transpires.

Objectives:

Fit or match between mentor and new teacher is best one that can be made, and is periodically evaluated;

Relationship is viewed as a working partnership in which new teacher becomes increasingly independent;

Relationship promotes reflective thinking in problem-solving;

Both mentor and new teacher view year as one in which they construct a better understanding of what it means to think and to learn (mentor, new teacher, children);

Use a common professional language for the exchange of ideas, not only to discuss the knowledge base of teaching, but also to facilitate discussion of presently unanticipated questions, problems, and issues;

Mentor and newcomer observe in each other's classrooms; newcomer has input in scheduling observation and meeting times;

Mentor teaches in "digestible bites" to reinforce information and challenge new growth;

Mentor guides newcomer from concrete to abstract, and makes links with Erikson's stages of psychosocial development in adulthood;

Mentor assumes responsibility for working with university personnel in training provisionally certified teachers;

Mentor assumes responsibility for explaining the culture of the greater community -- its beliefs, history, and shared traditions, as well as the geography, demographics, and overall complexion of neighborhood life -- that is the school's clientele;

Mentor shares mentoring experience with colleagues.

APPENDIX B

CRITERIA FOR BECOMING A MENTOR

The mentor is one who:

Can articulate reasons for wanting to become a mentor; can identify qualities, strengths, interests he/she would bring to the program;

Has shown interest; an involved and committed teacher; has demonstrated involvement in his/her own professional growth;

Has been acknowledged as being a successful classroom teacher:

- relates well to children and parents;
- works well with colleagues and other adults;
- has wide repertoire of teaching skills;

Has a positive attitude, makes good interpersonal judgments; can usually take a bad situation and make it better; is sensitive; has a sense of humor;

Is a continuous learner and enjoys learning;

Is open to growth and change;

Accepts his/her own imperfections;

Has generous spirit; is willing to give; is willing to take on additional responsibility;

Is flexible, with respect to time and teaching styles;

Places a high value on teaching;

Knows how to involve parents;

Has completed mentor training institute.

APPENDIX C

NEGOTIATING THE SCHOOL CULTURE: ALLEVIATING POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Potential problems can be short-circuited by:

Creating mechanisms for encouraging everyone to feel involved, be cooperative, feel supported, and be willing to support others (especially the newcomers);

Creating an appropriate role for parents to gain their advice and support for the mentoring program;

Shielding participants from misdirected blame if the program fails due to inadequate funding;

Coping with a principal who does not believe in the mentoring program;

Finding incentives for participation that don't create resentment, jealousy, and unhealthy competition; avoiding pettiness (a symptom of threat to personal esteem and security);

Overcoming division or exclusion when mentors receive stipends, "free time," and other supports while non-mentors do not, or when mentors are perceived as educating and socializing newcomers in a philosophy that non-mentors do not accept;

Ensuring that mentoring does not become an uncompensated "add-on";

Defusing and averting anger which results from lack of information from district to principal, or lack of communication between principal and teachers;

Ensuring that schools are not asked to do too much at once.

APPENDIX D

WHEELOCK COLLEGE CONFERENCE ON MENTOR TEACHER TRAINING

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